

“Atheism’s Fatal Flaw”

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Before I could ask the bright, young atheist why he wanted a ‘discussion’ with me, a follower of Jesus and a pastor/chaplain, he leveled his deophobic artillery and opened fire. It was loaded with every theological paradox and ‘gotcha’ argument massaged into his young mind by a university system bent on militant secularization through indoctrination (a duplicitous innovation from a system that praises societal evolution through abstract thought). The discussion stretched into two agonizing hours with the full assurances that he possessed an open mind while maintaining that I couldn’t possibly change said mind.

“Free-thought-without-the-impediment-of-the-God-myth is what humanity requires to ascend to a more enlightened state of being—so I will hammer at backward-thinking you until you agree with forward-thinking me.” And so forth. This was the nature my encounter with this fiery but patronizing young man.

Only the God that he so collegiately attacked knows if I wasted both of our time ‘discussing’ anything with him—after all, atheist clichés and paradoxical questions are a formidable rampart to rain fire down on opposing ideas and duck incoming missiles. Christians, by the way, are equally good at this same tactic, but I digress.

Curious fact #1: An honest atheist is an agnostic.

This isn’t a random declaration—I was an atheist, once, too. An honest atheist would admit that somewhere in that vast chasm between two insurmountable cosmological facts—that no one knows everything about the subject of God, and that no one knows everything about everything—a benevolent, loving, all-powerful creator-God *could* exist. As an atheist, I loathed the idea of God, refused to entertain any suggestion of His existence and deployed every scientific argument and paradoxical question I knew to undo the faith of others. But my deophobic mission demonstrated that I was only offended by the idea of His existence and could not guarantee His absence. Such was the paper platform that supported the young man’s relentless onslaught on my faith. I should have known—I used to be him.

Two hours of intense, mind-bending debate resulted in two empty revelations: he learned he was actually a hostile agnostic; I learned that my methodology in the ‘discussion’ was wrong-headed from the start.

Monday-morning-quarterbacking a missed opportunity is futile. *“I could’a, I should’a, if I’d only...”* Too late now. I started in on myself minutes after the bright young atheist walked out the door. But later that night something occurred to me—a *hypothetical* popped into my unsettled brain from my life as a Law Enforcement Chaplain. Had I expressed it during our discussion, it may have changed nothing, but it was a truth that tore into the question of militant atheism’s cogency: that it was a hopelessly impotent and often brutal belief system—a free-thinker’s placebo to the human dilemma it sought to alleviate through selective reasoning. Let me explain.

As a Law Enforcement Chaplain, I performed countless death-notifications. I never aspired to become an angel of death to a happy family and disliked every such encounter—but on the worst day of their lives I could also stay to assist them. Police officers are tasked, not trained—to deliver the bad news and immediately resume their duties—but when they called for a Chaplain, the notification could be done in a professional manner and the Chaplain could stay behind, helping the survivors get their lives back on track.

Curious fact #2:

There are few, if any, atheist Chaplains. Why? As I Monday-morning quarterbacked the ‘discussion’ it hit me. It was the play I didn’t run—a play that wouldn’t score any points, per se—just a hypothetical. But it might have clarified everything.

This is the hypothetical:

You’re a Police Chaplain and you’re an *atheist*.

Suddenly (but not unexpected), you receive simultaneous emergency calls and texts on your mobile phone:

FIRM: SHERIFF OFC; LOCATION: ROSEVILLE; T/C 1180/1144 MULTIPLE; MINORS INVOLVED; MEET THE DEPUTY: 1144 NOTIF. NEED ETA.

Translation: The County Sheriff just alerted you to a major injury accident with multiple fatalities, including children—you’re to meet the deputy to locate the next of kin to make notification. You contact dispatch, don your uniform and hurry to the location specified by the officer—the next of kin must receive the official news in person before it hits the media.

You arrive at the station—a grim-faced officer is waiting.

“This is a tough one,” he says. “Head-on with a drunk—the drunk survived, but he took out a father and his two kids. I have the address—wife is next-of-kin.” *Wife and mother*. An icy tingle spreads through your body.

“Let’s go,” the deputy says with uncharacteristic trepidation. You follow him in your car—you’re going to stay much longer than he will. It’s a short drive, but, oh, that it was a little longer—your words are about to destroy someone.

It’s early evening—the house looks welcoming and well lit. You both park a short distance from the residence, step out of your cars and quietly close the door. *Click*. The air smells like dinner. You speak to the officer in hushed tones and confirm the information: victim’s full names, dates of birth, name and relationship of the next-of-kin, any other known residents in the house.

“Okay,” you instruct the officer, “You knock, introduce yourself and then me. I’ll take it from there.” He nods slightly. Taking a deep breath, you exhale slowly. “Here we go.”

Knock Knock Knock.

A young-ish woman with a pleasant demeanor answers the door. She sees the uniforms and stops smiling.

“I’m Deputy _____ from the Sheriff’s Office. Are you Mrs. _____?”

“Yes...”

“This is Chaplain _____.”

“Mrs. _____,” you take over, “we have some important information for you—we need to come in.”

She steps back from the door as her hand moves to her mouth.

“What happened?” There is alarm in her voice; both her hands now cover her mouth.

“Please sit down—over here,” and you direct her to her sofa. She doesn’t want to sit.

“Please, Mrs. _____, sit here.” She reluctantly complies.

The deputy stands on the other side of the coffee table from the woman. You sit next to her on the couch, at a safe distance.

“Mrs. _____, do you have a husband named _____?”

Yes. She is breathless.

“Is his birthdate _____?”

Yes. Her eyes widen; she trembles.

“Do you have a son named _____?”

Oh God, O God, Oh God

“And a daughter na....”

OH GOD, OH GOD, OH GOD

“I’m here to inform you that they were involved in accident and were all killed...”

Remember, you’re an atheist.

Now, give her hope.

Give her hope anchored in *truth*.

Give her compassion beyond platitudes.

And remember, she will know the difference...

End of hypothetical.

Like a Bolshevik rallying parade, the academic world continues to accelerate its march toward a longed-for state of freedom from God—an estate whose mission would choke off the spring of genuine hope and non-platitudinal compassion for humanity. Once there, the fate of mankind will not be the enlightened superman, but extinction, having sacrificed the only vestige of human hope at the steel altar of existentialism.

French deist Voltaire once said, “If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him.” Why? God, in the Bible, never said there would be no tragedy, even for His most adoring children—quite to the contrary. But He did promise He would be right there when tragedy struck. Remove God and there is no more tragedy—only misery.

This is the impotence and brutality of Atheism. I wish I had told the young atheist.

I didn't, so I'm saying it now.